

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed January 22, 2007 claims 1, 6-10, 12, 13, 15-17, 21-24 and 27 were rejected. By the present response, claims 1, 17 and 22 have been amended and claim 4 has been canceled. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1, 5-17, and 20-27 will be pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims are requested.

Objections

Claims 4, 5, 11, 14, 20 and 25-26 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By the present response, a recitation of claim 4 has been incorporated into claim 1 and claim 17 has been amended to include subject matter similar to that from claim 4.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 6, 7, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wensley et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0175897, hereinafter "Wensley").

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter from claim 4. Independent claim 1 now includes recitations relating to growing or depositing an oxide layer on the sidewalls and bottom of the at least one trench. Wensley does not teach or even suggest forming an electrically insulating layer comprising depositing or growing an oxide layer.

Applicants therefore submit that claim 1 is allowable because Wensley cannot support a *prima facie* case of anticipation of claim 1 as amended.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 8, 9, 12, 17, 21-24 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wensley in view of Guo (U.S. Patent No. 6,894,357, hereinafter “Guo”). Claims 8, 9, and 12 are believed to be clearly patentable by virtue of dependency from allowable base claim 1.

Claim 17 has been amended to incorporate allowable subject matter from claim 4. Hence, independent claim 17 now includes recitations relating to an inside of the at least one trench of a microelectronic device being coated with an oxide layer. Neither Wensley nor Guo teaches or even suggests an oxide layer coating on the inside of the at least one trench. Applicants therefore submit that claim 17 is allowable because the cited references cannot support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of claim 17 as amended.

Claims 21-24 and 27 are believed to be clearly patentable by virtue of dependency from allowable base claim 17.

The Examiner rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wensley in view of Ring (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0066960, hereinafter “Ring”). Claim 13 is believed to be clearly patentable by virtue of dependency from allowable base claim 1.

The Examiner rejected claims 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wensley in view of Witek et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,146,970, hereinafter “Witek”). Claims 15 and 16 are believed to be clearly patentable by virtue of dependency from allowable base claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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